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Identical letters dated 8 October 2004 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I wish to draw your attention to the grave and revealing statements made this week by a senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Mr. Dov Weisglass, who in the past also served as Mr. Sharon's defence during the 1983 Kahan Commission of Inquiry into Mr. Sharon's involvement in the massacre of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon. According to reports, Weisglass, in an interview with a prominent Israeli newspaper, *Haaretz*, revealed in even more clear terms the true, malevolent intentions of the Israeli Government in the presentation of its so-called "disengagement plan". According to statements by Weisglass, Mr. Sharon devised the disengagement plan as a means of "freezing" the peace process and ensuring that there would be no political process with Palestinians.

His extensive comments throughout the interview made blatantly clear the disingenuous and malicious intent of the disengagement plan and called into serious question the nature of "assurances" given to the Israeli Government by the United States Government on very critical matters. in this regard, Weisglass crudely stated: "The disengagement is actually formaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that is necessary so there will not be a political process with the Palestinians." Moreover, in reference to the exact purpose of the disengagement

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plan, Weisglass stated: "The significance is the freezing of the political process. And when you freeze that process, you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed indefinitely from our agenda. And all of this with authority and permission. All with a presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress."

Responding to questions concerning the purported Israeli plan to evacuate settlements in the Gaza Strip under the disengagement plan, while still maintaining the Israeli hold on the West Bank, Weisglass commented specifically about Israel's intentions with regard to the illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and confirmed in stark terms Israel's duplicitous aims. In the interview, he is quoted as stating, inter alia: "in regard to the large settlement blocs, thanks to the disengagement plan, we have in our hands a first-ever American statement that they will be part of Israel ... out of 240,000 settlers, 190,000 will not be moved from their place. Will not be moved." Further, he callously stated: "what I effectively agreed to with the Americans was that part of the settlements would not be dealt with at all, and the rest will not be dealt with until the Palestinians turn into Finns".

The comments by Weisglass echo remarks already made by Mr. Sharon regarding his intentions towards the peace process in general and the road map in specific. Mr. Sharon recently declared in very clear terms that the road map is not on the table. Further, he informed several international leaders that his disengagement plan is the only initiative and has nothing to do with the road map, although he claimed it might lead to a return to the road map.

The recent statements by Mr. Sharon, Mr. Weisglass and other Israeli officials, as well as the entire content of the Weisglass interview with *Haaretz*, are dangerous reflections of official Israeli policy that must be taken seriously by the international community. Such statements, coupled with the fact that Israel only accepted "the steps" in the road map and only after attaching 14 reservations to it, leave no doubt with regard to the real positions of the current Israeli Government. It must also be underscored that this is the same Government that has persisted unrelentingly with its illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian people, including its unlawful construction of the wall and its settlement activities throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

It is more than obvious that the occupying Power has neither the desire nor the intention to work towards an end to the occupation and to the achievement of peace on the basis of the two-State solution. On the contrary, this Israeli Government has revealed in both words and deeds that it is not interested in peace, that it is not a partner for peace and that it seeks only to perpetuate its subjugation of another people and their land through its continuing acts of aggression, expansionism and annexation. Rather than adhering to international law and cooperating with international efforts to resolve the conflict, including through implementation of the Quartet road map, the occupying Power has exerted every effort to defy the law, undermine the peace process and divert the course towards its own sinister plans to serve its own illegitimate interests. Accordingly, such revelations must be directly, clearly and urgently addressed by the international community, including by the Quartet, if the peace process is to be salvaged and the hopes for peace resurrected.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 25, 36, 37, 76, 104 and 138, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
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